

2013

**Garma Institute for Foundational Learning**



**Jawun secondment final report**

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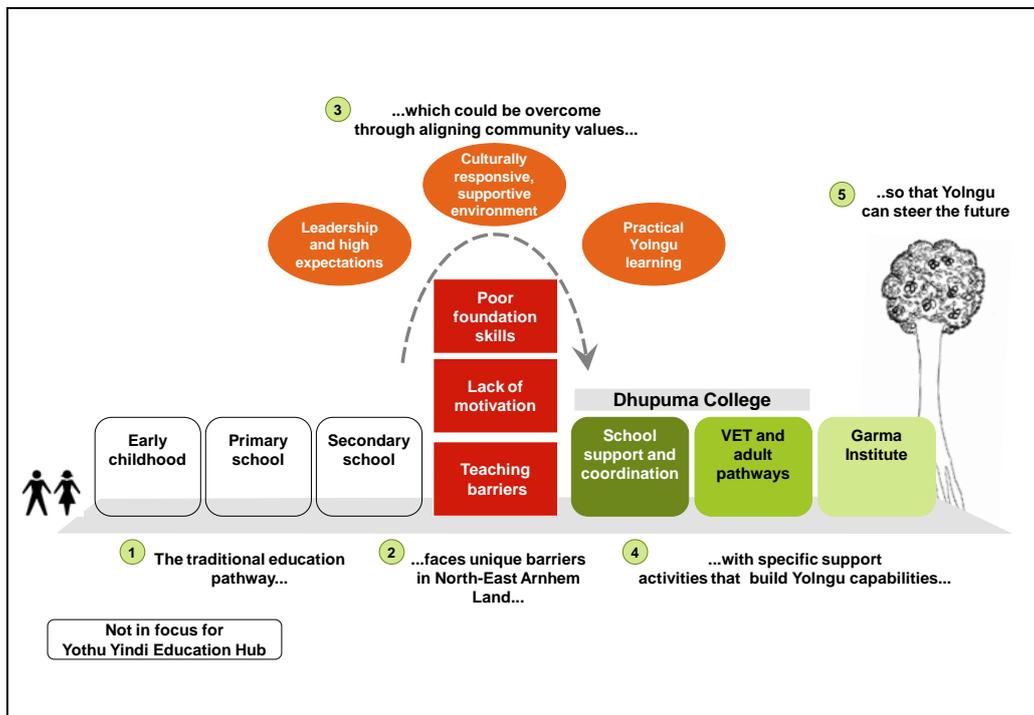
The Boston Consulting Group

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**Project Background**

Since the inception of the Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF) in the 1990s, the vision was there to create a special centre for education and culture in North East Arnhem Land (NEAL). This vision is frequently referred to as the **Garma Institute**.<sup>1</sup> As YYF continues to grow and develop, there is an increased emphasis on addressing the needs of the Yolngu people – adult education, job readiness training and pathways from welfare to work.

*Exhibit A: High level vision for Garma Institute*



Recently, two sets of Jawun secondees have conducted over 100 conversations within the local community in Gove and other stakeholders to define the long term vision for the Garma Institute, and conduct a feasibility study and preliminary development phase for the adult pathways component.

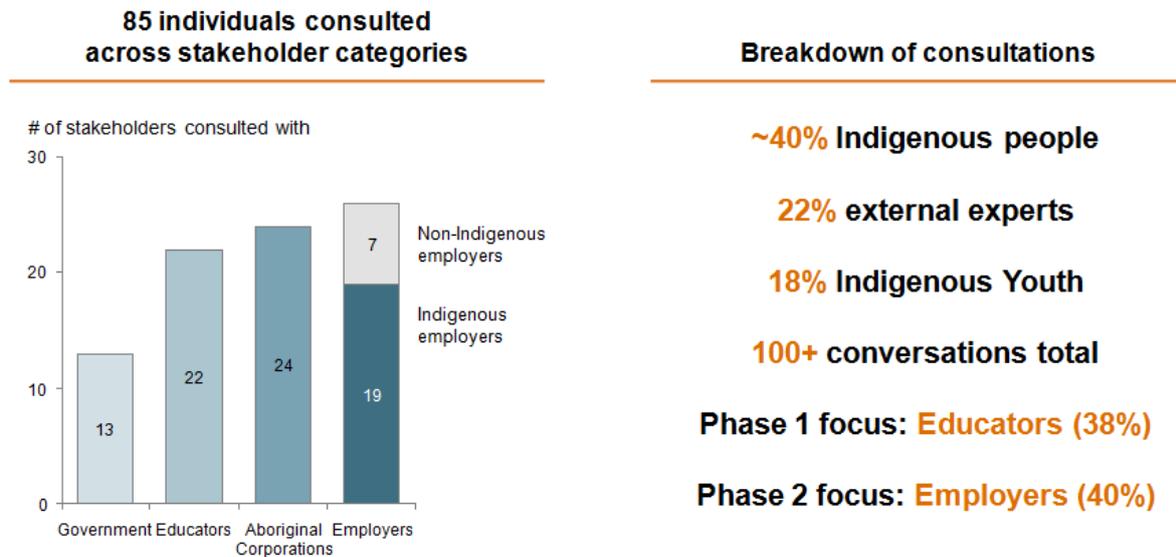
This Project Summary document is the result of Phase 2, and includes detailed recommendations on the type of training that should be offered for "VET and adult pathways"

<sup>1</sup> There have been several names used for this vision/concept, including Yothu Yindi Education Hub, Garma Hub etc. However, as of April 2013, the decision is to use "Garma Institute" by YYF management.

## Community Needs & Demand Assessment

To date, over 100 consultations have been held with stakeholders from government, the education sector, community leaders, private industries, Indigenous corporations, employers, education experts and Indigenous youth.

*Exhibit B: Stakeholder consultation summary for Phase 1 and 2 of Project*



Through these community consultations, the team identified that there are a number of existing VET and adult pathway programs in the community today. The problem is not a lack of vocational and adult pathway programs. Rather, the underlying problem is that these existing programs are not able to prepare participants for employment, because students lack the basic reading, writing and comprehension skills (LLN – language, literacy and numeracy), and other essential competencies such as time management, personal hygiene & wellbeing.

In the absence of strong foundational skills, existing VET programs cannot succeed in reaching their full potential and create a link to real employment. Trainings that can deliver foundational skills can therefore address some of these challenges faced by VET programs in the region by delivering these fundamental skills.

**Summary: the immediate gap on the education and employment pathway is foundational learning, and the proposed solution is the Garma Institute for Foundational Learning**

## Proposed Foundational Learning Project Framework

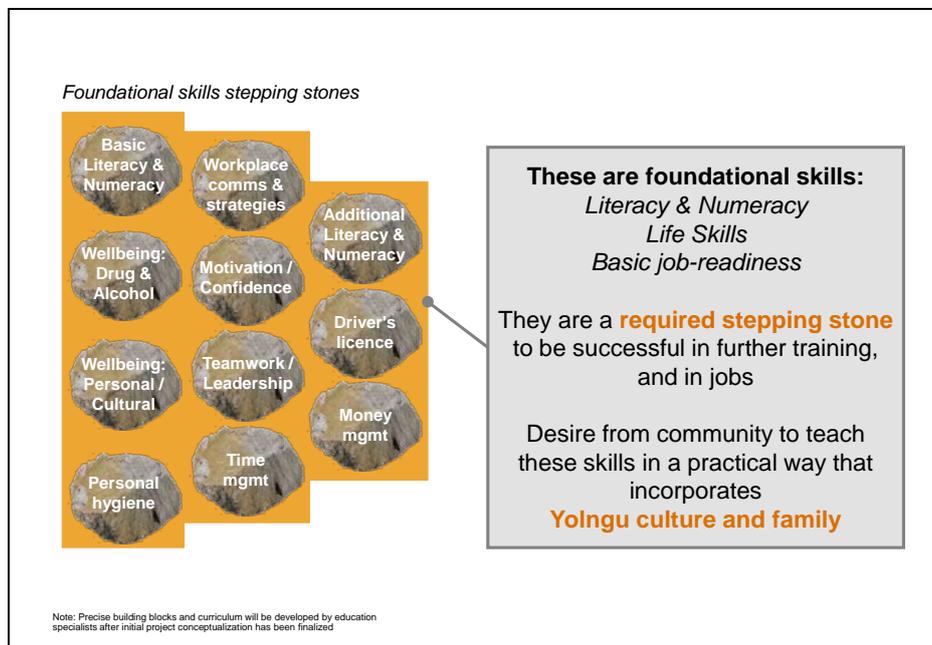
The overall objectives of Garma Institute for Foundational Learning are:

- To deliver foundational training and support greater success across current adult education and training programs in NEAL, while maximising usage of current infrastructure on the Gulkula site;
- To develop closer linkages between community organisations and employers to improve pathway from education & training to employment

Foundational skills are defined here as critical life skills that enables the learner to achieve successful outcomes in vocational training and sustainable employment. The three core areas of foundational skills are outlined below, and in Exhibit C:

- Basic literacy and numeracy skills seeks to equip the learner with sufficient skills to understand vocational training materials, perform technical tasks (incl. measurement and calculation) and fully grasp occupational health and safety (OH&S) procedures
- Life skills include physical and mental wellbeing such as freedom from drugs and alcohol, personal hygiene and upkeep
- Basic job-readiness skills includes workplace communication, time management, money management, and team work

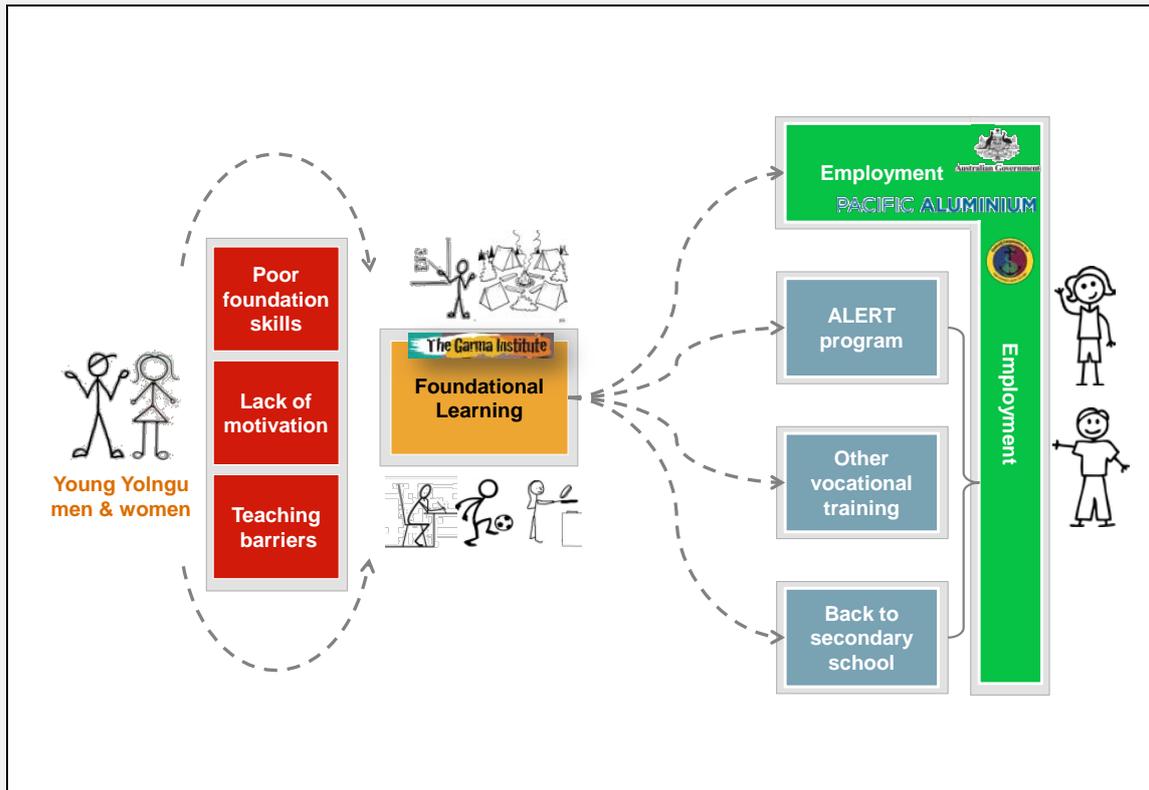
### Exhibit C: Definition of foundational learning



Ultimately, foundational learning is not the ideal end-goal for the learner. Foundational learning should rather enable the learner to pursue more advanced, job-specific training and vocational programs; it is the latter that will ultimately lead the learner to truly sustainable employment.

### Foundational learning pathway

Exhibit D: Garma Institute – proposed pathway for participants



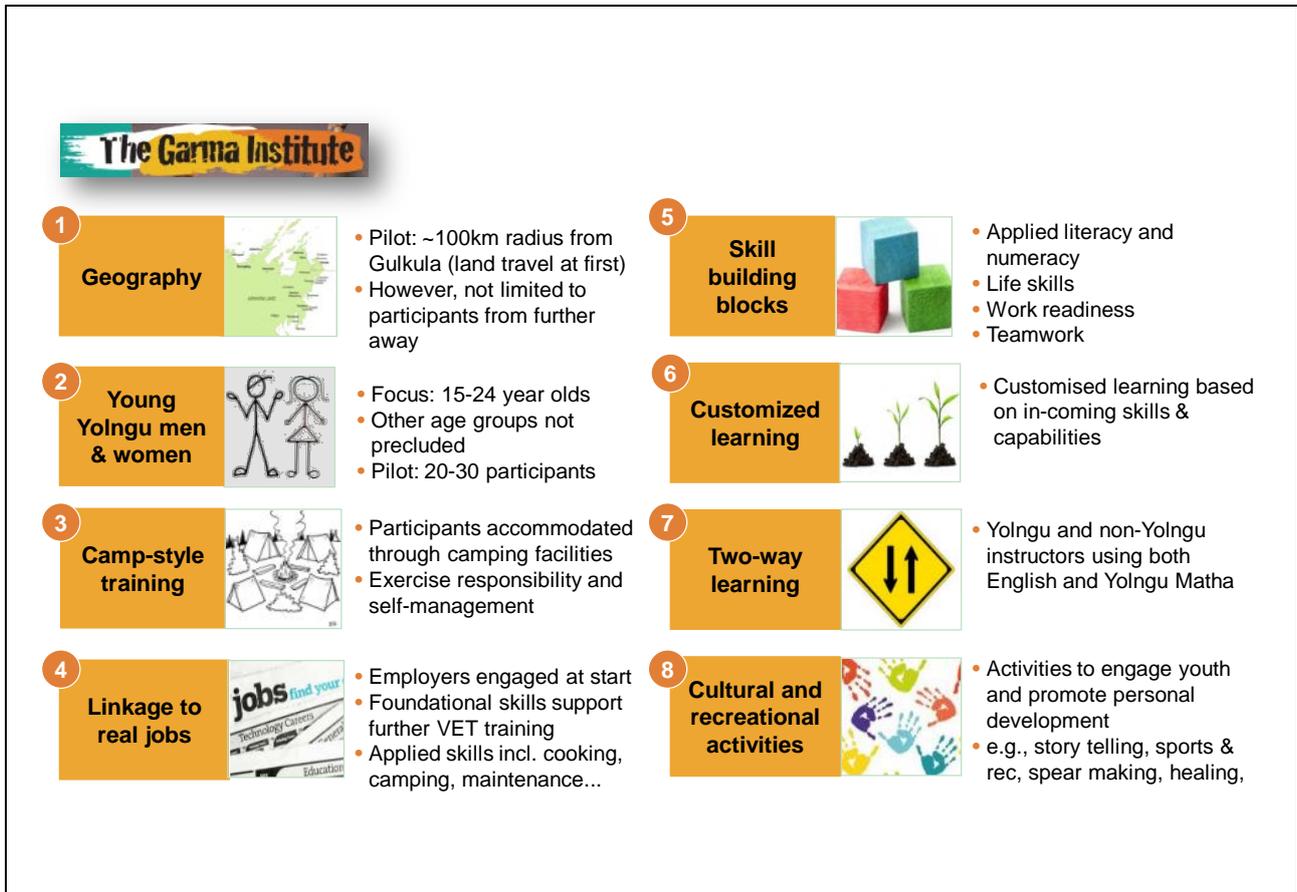
Young Yolngu jobseekers between the ages of 15-24, who may or may not have finished secondary school, are eligible for this proposed foundational learning program. Their obstacles for gaining sustainable employment may include poor foundational skills, lack of motivation and teaching barriers driven primarily by cultural gaps such as language and style of learning.

By participating in foundational learning, these young people are given the opportunity to undertake intensive training in a safe and culturally sensitive environment that delivers programs designed to overcome teaching barriers. The Garma Institute is designed to not replicate or replace school, but rather to enable those who have 'missed out' on the basics in their education to-date to gain foundational skills through structured learning as well as practical activities such as camping, cooking, ground facility management, work experience, sports and art.

At the end of the course (estimated to be ~8 weeks), the program will work with the learner to choose the next step in the path – entry-level employment, ALERT training from Pacific Aluminium, other VET education, or back to secondary school where appropriate.

## Proposed Operational Model

Exhibit E: Foundational learning operating model is culturally rich, geared to jobs



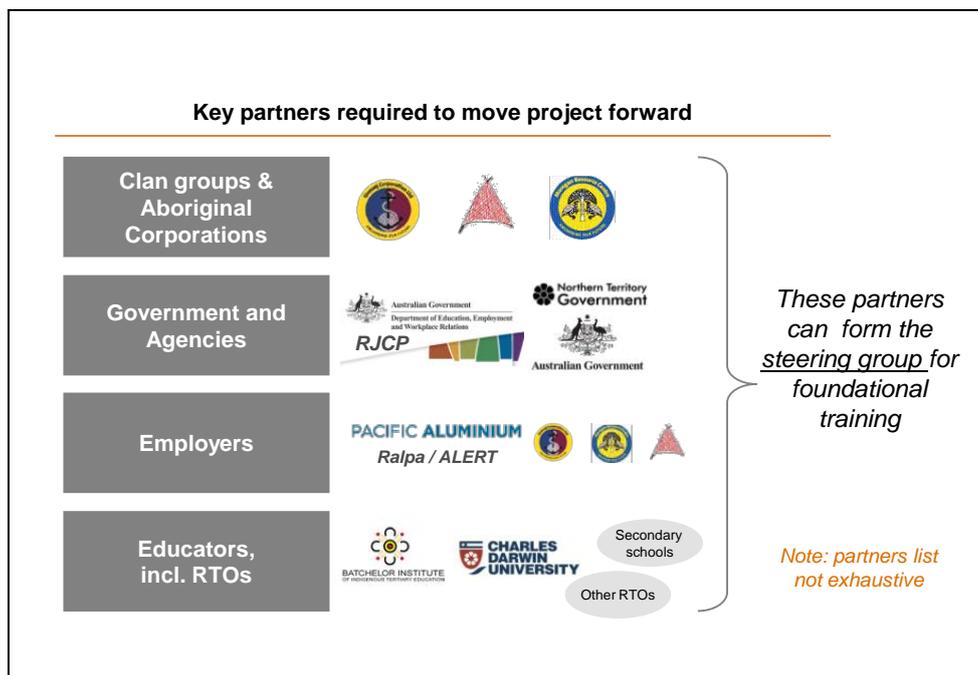
Based on consultations, there is general community consensus that the Garma Institute for Foundational Learning should:

- Look and feel different than a school or classroom environment
- Deliver learning programs that addresses the learning needs of Yolngu youth, including the need to incorporate practical, applied hands-on learning opportunities relevant to employment, and have instruction be in both English and Yolngu Matha
- Include an element of assessment upfront that is linked cohesively with any other assessments (e.g., with RJCP)
- Create personalised development plans and pathways based on individual skill levels, learning needs, and employment ambitions
- Provide on-going, personalised mentorship and support through the process, including post-program completion support, in order to work with the individual on pathway to employment

## Partnerships are critical to making the Garma Institute a reality

The Garma Institute for Foundational Learning seeks to benefit multiple clans and families in NEAL, and provide one component within the broader regional education and employment strategy. Therefore, identifying and establishing effective partnerships with key stakeholders is critical for success of the project. These stakeholders are shown in Exhibit F below:

Exhibit F: Partnership landscaping



The Garma Institute for Foundational Learning will be governed by a Steering Group that reports to the Yothu Yindi Foundation Board. This Steering Group should be composed of representatives from the four core groups of stakeholders.

### Link to Jobs

One of the most important success factors in this pathway is the link to employment. Employers have been involved in developing the foundational learning concept from the start. In community consultations, it is also evident that the community believes that foundational learning must be linked to eventual employment outcomes as part of a single, unified employment pathway.

From a preliminary scan of the job market in Gove, there are real jobs that the local community can aspire to. Local Indigenous organisations are already working together to develop innovative ways to access more jobs in the local economy that will be appropriate for Yolngu youth. With careful planning and engagement of employers, it is realistic for the Foundational Learning program participants to be able to participate in employment opportunities in the region if they complete the recommended trainings and have the aspiration to participate in the labour force.

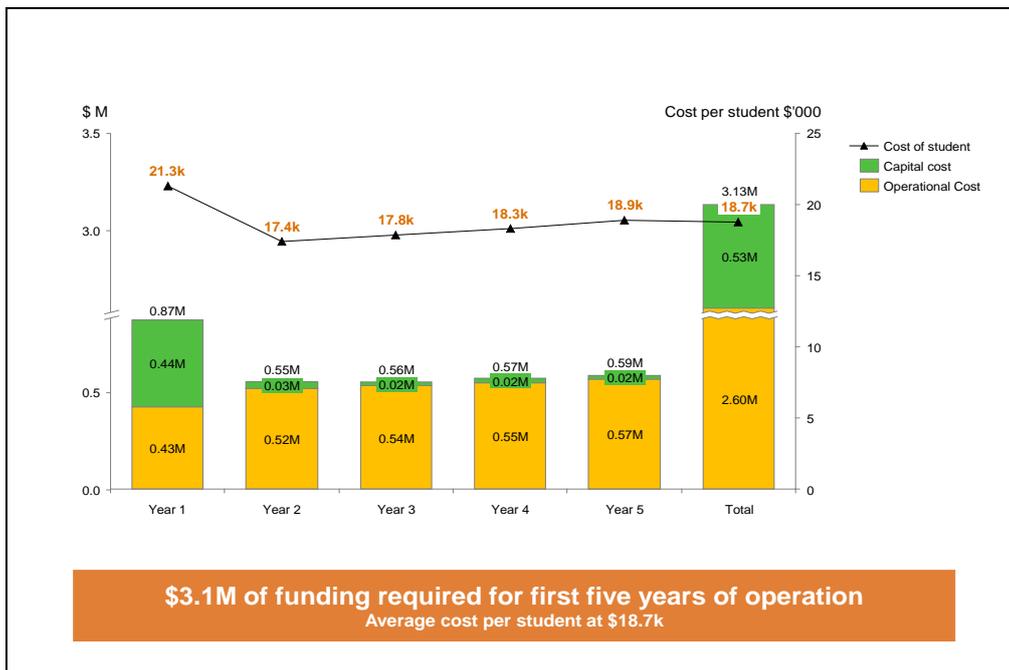
### Overview of projected financials

The estimated project cost for first five years of operation to be approximately \$3.1M. This cost estimate covers capital and operational cost to provide eight weeks of foundational learning to approximately 140 Yolngu youth. This equates to approximately \$18.7K in operational cost per student on average. The major drivers of cost include course participant numbers, staff requirements, course frequency and duration. Seventeen percent of total costs are capital, which will mostly be spent in the first year; the remainder are operational costs (83%).

Some of the major assumptions used in this financial projection are:

- Main teaching and material costs delivered by RTOs (through government funding, RTOs to assume cost of trainers and their accommodation, travel and food costs)
- Gumatj Corp to manage Gulkula site, including cost of infrastructure and facility management and YYF to pay a rental fee for the site during course
- Course participants do not pay a fee for their participation
- All staff with the exception of the project coordinator are hired either for half of the year, are casual employees or paid a set fee per course

Exhibit G: Five year financial projection



Funding for the project can be sourced through a variety of avenues, including the Federal and Northern Territory government, training funding from the local RJCP provider, funding from private sector players such as Pacific Aluminium and from RTO's remote education programs.

## **Approximate Implementation timing**

The Garma Institute for Foundational Learning is a significant endeavour that will require collective effort of the managing organisation (Yothu Yindi Foundation), represented clans and families, Indigenous organisations, Pacific Aluminium, RTOs, the government and the community at large. Going forward, at the earliest there could be a first cohort of students in late 2014. More likely, the first cohorts will complete courses in 2015.

A preliminary master implementation plan has been devised for project delivery. However, before that can commence, there are a few next steps that can proceed immediately:

- Secure funding for Project Coordinator position
- Seek funding for overall project delivery
- Pursue and solidify potential partnership opportunities with key stakeholders
- Identify key stakeholders to participate in Garma Institute Steering Group

## **Evolution of Garma Institute for Foundational Learning over time**

The Garma Institute for Foundational Learning seeks to fill an immediate gap between secondary school and employment for some Yolngu youth today. It is one component within the larger regional strategy for education, training and employment.<sup>2</sup> However, there is an important expectation that the region is taking or will be taking active efforts to implement educational reform so that young people that have graduated from pre-school, primary and secondary schools will no longer require foundational learning training in order to participate effectively in VET training and/or seek sustainable employment. The Garma Institute for Foundational Learning seeks to evolve and improve continuously in order to meet changes in the external environment. The Garma Institute can look for opportunities to continue to play a supportive role in partnership with other stakeholders on the education and employment pathway as the needs of local community evolve over time.

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<sup>2</sup> Given the focused mandate created under the initial vision of the Garma Institute, it is not currently focused on education reform at the pre-school, primary and secondary levels. However, the Garma Institute is in support of these changes, and opportunities may arise in the future for partners in the Garma Institute to also partner on future education initiatives